E-LEARNING IN POLICE TRAINING — THE CASE OF THE SLOVENIAN POLICE

Borut Rozman
Security and Support Division, Police Academy
General Police Directorate, Slovenian Police
Slovenia

Abstract: During the reorganisation process of the Slovenian Police in 2013, the Police Academy established a new department, the Social Skills and Research Centre. One of its first tasks was to analyse and assess e-learning in the Slovenian Police. This article is a résumé of the analysis and assessment report.

INTRODUCTION

The Slovenian Police implemented e-learning in 2010. In 2013 alone, 38 092 participants finished courses in an e-learning environment. The Slovenian Police is committed to e-learning in part because of its online availability 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. The implementation of e-learning was made in the police 'ITK environment'. The Slovenian Police e-learning environment is also used by other public services. After four full years of implementation, it can be said that e-learning introduced new possibilities into police training. The evaluation of several courses shows, however, that e-learning has to be developed in combination with classic training and also with the use of different approaches. One of them is blended learning, where an e-learning platform is used to support classic training.

E-LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION

Plans for the implementation of e-learning in Slovenian police training began in 2008. Neighbour countries were approached but it was found that there were no e-learning solutions present at that time. An e-learning method had to be built and a team of experts was nominated to create an e-learning solution.

It took two years to develop a project suitable for police training. Nominated experts have been involved in several working groups in CEPOL and FRONTEX, building expert modules for their LMS solutions. One Slovenian expert is a member of the FRONTEX project 'European Joint Master's in Strategic Border Management', particularly developing a Leadership and Organisational Development Module, including an e-learning component. Following this cooperation, there are pre-deployment modules for Slovenian police officers leaving the country for UN peacekeeping missions. These courses are certified and constantly reviewed by UN professionals.

The Slovenian Police uses two separate e-learning environments: EIDA — an internal environment, accessible only from workstations connected to the Intranet of the Slovenian Police; and EIDAZ, which is accessible from any computer connected to the Internet. As might be expected, the separation is due to data sensitivity. EIDA is only used for the training of the Slovenian Police force. The other platform (EIDAZ) is used for the classic education of police officers, for external parties such as the Ministry of the Interior, for municipal security etc. Both platforms are built on the LCMS platform Moodle, currently running version 2.6.3.

Following the implementation of e-learning, the decline of traditional forms of training was expected but thorough analysis reveals quite

opposite results. Since the cost ratio drops significantly, traditional forms of training also rise. The usage of e-learning was also analysed. With analysis we wanted to find out if we transformed proper classic training into proper e-learning classrooms. We also wanted to find out if users had a lot of problems during the courses. At first we tried with two MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) type courses which every Slovenian police officer has to attend. We found out that this kind of online course is satisfactory and results were great.

We also tried to implement some Traffic Police courses, but during the period of training we discovered that physical presence in the classroom is essential for the course to succeed, so we now are using a blended learning approach. Course participants at first get access to the e-classroom to prepare for a classic in-classroom lecture. Later on they discuss material with a lecturer in the classroom. After the classroom lecture, the lecturer gives them assignments in the e-classroom. After that, an evaluation is made online.

We find this approach very useful since trainees come to the classroom prepared and the success of this kind of blended learning is much better than just e-learning or classic learning. It is also cost effective, since we can now shorten the time for physical presence of police officers in classrooms.

THE PROCESS OF E-LEARNING

Figure 1 shows how the process of e-learning begins in the programme planning stage, verified by the Programme Board, and is inserted in the Training Catalogue. Opening of a new classroom is only possible by issuing a preliminary award in training centre information system of (ISCIU) where data is used from the Training Catalogue of and attendees from the staff data database (KISK). After the course is completed, course data is exported from the e-learning environment and re-imported to the ISCU database, certificates are issued to participants and a report is created.

Figure 1 — E-learning process.
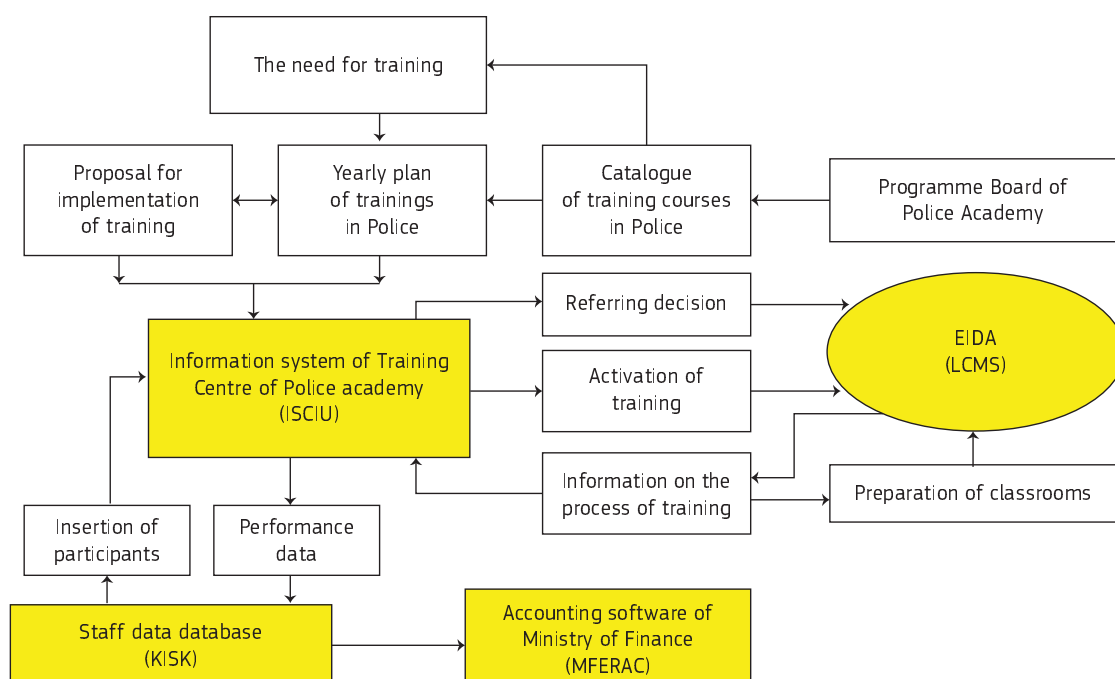
STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

We mentioned that the Slovenian Police conduct training and education through e-learning platforms. Below, we will discuss only training, since other types of education takes just 0.2 percentage points of the total group.

Table 1 and Figure 2 show the increase in the number of participants in the years from 2010 to 2013. The data show the opposite of what we had expected at first. We expected a significant drop of classic trainings to be present after the implementation of e-learning, but after an initial drop of 24 percentage points in year 2012 compared with year 2011, significant growth of 39 percentage points is recorded in year 2013 compared with year 2012. Graph 1 shows a significant growth of classical and e-learning training in 2013. In our analysis we have not determined the reasons but we must point out that in 2013 new Police legislation entered into force.

*Table 1 — **Overview of classic training and e-learning supported training in the Police from 2010 to 2013.***

Type of training	2010	2011	2012	2013
Classic training	25 715	22 610	17 182	28 148
E-learning	7 812	20 361	23 219	38 092
Sum total	33 329	42 971	40 401	66 240

Sources: Report on Police work in year 2010, number 0101-6/2011/69 (2061-01), 28. 2. 2011; Report on Police work in year 2011: 0101-5/2012/113 (2061-01), 12. 3. 2012; Report on Police work in year 2012: 0101-15/2013/115 (2061-01), 18. 2. 2013; Report on Police work in year 2013-7/2014/384 (2061-01), 28. 3. 2014.

*Figure 2 — **Graphical overview of participants involved in classic training and e-learning in Police from 2010 to 2013.***
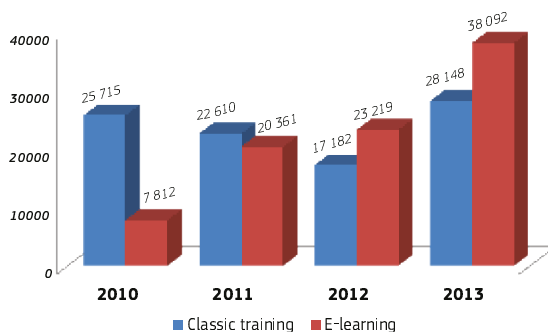
If we look at the entire period from 2010 to 2013, data shows trends in growth of both e-learning and classic trainings for 50 percentage points. From another point of view we can say that participants number rise for 50 percentage points from year 2010 to 2013.

FUNDING OF TRAINING

Since the collapse of world markets, the Slovenian Police has also been cutting costs at several levels including training. From Table 2 and Figure 3 we can see that from the year 2010 to 2013 there was a significant drop of 225 percentage points in funding of training.

*Table 2 — **Funding of training in Slovenian Police from 2010 to 2013.***

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Funding of training	€450 000	€375 000	€300 000	€200 000

Sources: Catalogue of training courses in year 2010, number: 007-208/2012/12, 5.11.2009; Catalogue of training courses in year 2011, number: 603-150/2010/15, 10.12.2010; Catalogue of training courses in year 2012, number: 604-680/2011/27, 20 12 2011; Catalogue of training courses in year 2013, number: 604-1023/2012/18, 7.12. 2012.

*Figure 3 — **Funding of training in Slovenian Police from 2010 to 2013.***
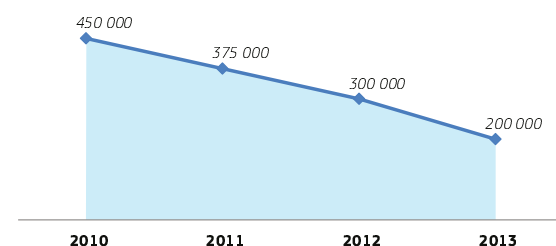
E-learning significantly lowered the costs of learning and we must not deny this. We lowered costs at the point of managing police time. Where previously we had to transport police officers to the location where the training was taking place, now they can learn at their workplace or even at home.

CONCLUSION

After four full years we can say that e-learning has introduced new possibilities into police training. The evaluation of several courses led us to the conclusion that we have to develop e-learning in combination with classic training and use different approaches; one of them is blended learning, where we use the e-learning platform to support classic training. Even though funding was cut more than in half, we can say that e-learning is a successful way of training in the Slovenian Police. The Police Academy is a leading institution in e-learning in the Slovenian public sector.

REFERENCES

Report on Police work in year 2010, number 0101-6/2011/69 (2061-01), 28. 2. 2011.

Report on Police work in year 2011: 0101-5/2012/113 (2061-01), 12. 3. 2012.

Report on Police work in year 2012: 0101-15/2013/115 (2061-01), 18. 2. 2013.

Report on Police work in year 2013-7/2014/384 (2061-01), 28. 3. 2014.

Catalogue of training courses in year 2010, number: 007-208/2012/12, 5.11.2009.

Catalogue of training courses in year 2011, number: 603-150/2010/15, 10.12.2010.

Catalogue of training courses in year 2012, number: 604-680/2011/27, 20 12 2011.

Catalogue of training courses in year 2013, number: 604-1023/2012/18, 7.12. 2012.